

22. The method of claim 21, wherein said preserving agent is phosphoric acid, and said mixing step comprises adjusting the pH of the mucosa tissue with phosphoric acid to about 2-4.

23. The method of claim 21, wherein said preserving agent is hydrogen peroxide, and said mixing step comprises mixing less than about 1% by weight of hydrogen peroxide with said mucosa tissue, said percent by weight hydrogen peroxide being based upon the weight of the mucosa tissue taken as 100% by weight.

24. The method of claim 21, wherein said preserving agent is hydrogen peroxide, and further including the step of heating said mucosa tissue to a temperature of from about 50-105°C prior to said mixing step.

25. The method of claim 21, wherein said preserving agent is hydrogen peroxide, and said preserved mucosa tissue has an ash content of less than about 10% by weight, based upon the total weight of the preserved mucosa tissue as 100% by weight.

26. The method of claim 21, wherein said preserved mucosa tissue has a standard plate count of less than about 20,000 cfu/g about seven days after said preserving step.

27. The method of claim 21, wherein said preserved mucosa tissue has an *E. Coli* count of less than about 10 cfu/g about seven days after said preserving step.

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--36. A method of treating mucosa tissue, the method comprising combining the mucosa tissue and a peroxide-containing compound to form an intermediate.--

a' --37. The method of claim 36, wherein the peroxide-containing compound is hydrogen peroxide.--

--38. The method of claim 36, wherein the concentration of the peroxide-containing compound in the intermediate is initially less than about 1% by weight, based upon the total weight of the mucosa tissue and the peroxide-containing compound being 100% by weight.--

--39. The method of claim 38, wherein the concentration of the peroxide-containing compound in the intermediate is initially less than about 0.5% by weight, based upon the total weight of the mucosa tissue and the peroxide-containing compound being 100% by weight.--

--40. The method of claim 36, the method further comprising mixing the peroxide-containing compound and the mucosa tissue to form a mucosa product, the concentration of the peroxide-containing compound remaining in the mucosa product being less than about 0.04% by weight, based upon the total weight of the mucosa product being 100% by weight.--

--41. The method of claim 36, the method further comprising mixing the peroxide-containing compound and the mucosa tissue to form a mucosa product, the concentration of the peroxide-containing compound remaining in the mucosa product being less than about 0.01% by weight, based upon the total weight of the mucosa product being 100% by weight.--

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~~--42. The improvement of claim 36, the method further comprising mixing the peroxide-containing compound and the mucosa tissue to form a mucosa product, the concentration of the peroxide-containing compound remaining in the mucosa product being undetectable when the concentration of the peroxide-containing compound remaining in the mucosa product is determined using KMnO<sub>4</sub> titration.--~~

--43. The method of claim 36, the method further comprising:  
heating the mucosa tissue to a temperature in the range of about 50-105°C  
prior to combining the peroxide-containing compound and the  
mucosa tissue.--

- 44. The method of claim 36, the method further comprising:  
heating the mucosa tissue to a temperature in the range of about 65-75°C  
prior to combining the peroxide-containing compound and the mucosa  
tissue.--
- 45. The method of claim 36 wherein the mucosa tissue comprises substantially non-  
hydrolyzed mucosa tissue.--
- 46. The method of claim 45 wherein the intermediate is a treated mucosa product, the  
method further comprising hydrolyzing the treated mucosa product to form a hydrolyzed mucosa  
product.--
- 47. The method of claim 46 wherein the hydrolyzed mucosa product comprises heparin,  
the method further comprising extracting heparin from the hydrolyzed mucosa product.--
- 48. The method of claim 46, the method further comprising contacting the hydrolyzed  
mucosa product with a protein-containing material under conditions effective to hydrolyze at least  
some protein of the protein-containing material and thereby reduce enzymatic activity of the  
hydrolyzed mucosa product.--
- 49. The method of claim 36 wherein the mucosa tissue comprises hydrolyzed mucosa  
tissue.--
- 50. The method of claim 49, the method further comprising contacting the hydrolyzed  
mucosa tissue with a protein-containing material under conditions effective to hydrolyze at least  
some protein of the protein-containing material and thereby reducing enzymatic activity of the  
hydrolyzed mucosa tissue.--

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--51. The method of claim 36 wherein the intermediate is a treated mucosa product, the treated mucosa product having an ash concentration of less than about 10% by weight, based upon the total weight of the treated mucosa product being 100% by weight.--

--52. The method of claim 51, wherein the treated mucosa product has an ash content of less than about 7% by weight, based upon the total weight of the treated mucosa product being 100% by weight.--

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--53. A method of treating mucosa tissue, the method comprising adding phosphoric acid to the mucosa tissue to form an intermediate.--

--54. The method of claim 53 wherein the intermediate initially has a pH in the range of about 2-4 after the phosphoric acid is added to the mucosa tissue.--

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REMARKS

This Amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action mailed on January 11, 2002. In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 21-27 and indicated that claims 1-20 and 28-35 were withdrawn from consideration in the above-identified application as being drawn to a non-elected invention. With this Amendment, claims 1-20 and 28-35 are canceled, no claims are amended, and new claims 36-54 are added. Upon entry of this Amendment, the above-identified application will include claims 21-27 and 36-54.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 21-27 as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,607,840 to Van Gorp et al (the "Van Gorp patent") in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,438,100 to Balslev et al (the "Balslev patent") and U.S. Patent No. 4,145,451 to Oles (the "Oles patent"). Nonetheless, despite the Examiner's rejection, the Van Gorp, Balslev, and